

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /063 W
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O R 252115Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4287
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PGOV, AR, CI
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA REJECTS BEAGLE AWARD

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 0198 (B) BUENOS AIRES 0501

1. AS ANTICIPATED, ARGENTINA TODAY PUBLICLY
DECLARED THE BEAGLE CHANNEL AWARD AS "NULL AND VOID",
EXPLAINING ITS DECISION WAS DUE TO UNACCEPTABLE HISTORICAL
AND GEOGRAPHICAL ERRORS MADE BY THE ARBITRATION COURT.
AT THE SAME TIME, IT REITERATED ITS WISH TO RESOLVE THE
TERRITORIAL DISPUTE THROUGH BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH
CHILE. THE ARGENTINE DECLARATION WAS PRESENTED TO THE
BRITISH CHARGE D'AFFAIRES AND CHILEAN AMBASSADOR BY
FOREIGN MINISTRY MONTES IN THE MINISTRY AT NOON TODAY
(JANUARY 25). ARGENTINA'S MISSIONS OVERSEAS REPORTEDLY
WILL ALSO HAVE COPIES OF THE DECLARATION TO ADVISE HOST
GOVERNMENTS OF THE DECISION. TONIGHT MONTES WILL
ANNOUNCE THE DECISION OVER NATIONWIDE TELEVISION AND RADIO,
POSSIBLY WITH PRESIDENT VIDELA AT HIS SIDE.

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2. TODAY'S PRESS REPORTS CONFIRMED THAT THE SECOND ARGENTINE-
CHILEAN PRESIDENTIAL SUMMIT MEETING TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR
THIS WEEK HAS BEEN POSTPONED AT THE REQUEST OF CHILEAN
GOVERNMENT. REPORTEDLY THE CHILEAN MILITARY GENERAL STAFFS
NEED MORE TIME TO ANALYZE THE RESULTS OF THE MENDOZA SUMMIT ON
JANUARY 19 AND THE PRESIDENTS WILL RESUME TALKS IN CHILE

PERHAPS IN EARLY FEBRUARY. AN UNIDENTIFIED CHILEAN ENVOY REPORTEDLY CAME TO BUENOS AIRES YESTERDAY TO EXPLAIN TO VIDELA PINOCHET'S REASONS FOR REQUESTING THE POSTPONEMENT, WHICH WAS ANNOUNCED AS HAVING BEEN MUTUALLY AGREED TO BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS.

3. ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS, THE CHILEAN FOREIGN MINISTRY YESTERDAY RELEASED A LETTER RECENTLY SENT TO BOTH THE ARGENTINE AND CHILEAN GOVERNMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BEAGLE ARBITRATION COURT SIR GERALD FITZMAURICE. THE LETTER REMINDS BOTH PARTIES THAT, ACCORDING TO THE BILATERAL AGREEMENT SUBMITTING THE DISPUTE TO ARBITRATION, THE AWARD SHALL BE FINAL AND LEGALLY BINDING ON BOTH PARTIES AND THAT THE COURT SHALL NOT BE RETIRED UNTIL IT CAN ADVISE THE BRITISH CROWN THAT THE AWARD HAS BEEN FULLY AND MATERIALLY EXECUTED. IT POINTS OUT THAT UNDER THE TERMS OF THE AWARD THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE UNTIL FEBRUARY 2 TO ADVISE THE COURT OF THE STEPS TAKEN TO EXECUTE THE RULING.

4. THE NEWSPAPER CLARIN QUOTES CHILEAN JURISTS AS SAYING THAT THE ARGENTINE REJECTION IS INVALID AND WILL NOT AFFECT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHILE IN THE DISPUTED AREA BECAUSE THE RULING ITSELF IS FINAL AND CANNOT BE APPEALED. "LA OPINION" ALSO REPORTED WITH SURPRISE AND DISMAY A STATEMENT BY THE CHILEAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAC PARTY THAT THE ARGENTINE REJECTION IS A "VIOLATION OF FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES AND A THREAT TO PEACE." LA OPINION NOTES THAT JUST LAST WEEK A NUMBER OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT LEADERS HAD BEEN BANISHED BY THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT. (COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE FITZMAURICE LETTER IS DESCRIBED AS FURTHER PRESSURE ON ARGENTINA, A BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIAL SAID IT WAS PROBABLY A STANDARD NOTIFICATION ROUTINELY DISPATCHED IN ORDER FOR THE COURT TO COMPLETE ITS TASK. HE SAID THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DOES NOT ANTICIPATE TAKING ANY FURTHER ACTION ON THE MATTER; HOWEVER, HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER OR HOW THE COURT MIGHT RESPOND TO THE ARGENTINE ANNOUNCEMENT.)

5. COMMENT: AFTER A LONG AND STRIDENT PRESS CAMPAIGN DEFENDING THE ARGENTINE POSITION AND A SERIES OF FRUSTRATED EFFORTS TO REACH AN UNDERSTANDING WITH CHILE, THE GRIM AND UNPRECEDENTED TASK OF REJECTING AN INTERNATIONAL AWARD IS AT HAND. THE ARGENTINE PRESS AND PUBLIC OPINION REFLECTS A CALM, FIRM, BUT RESIGNED ATTITUDE AND ACUTE DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THIS CONTENTIOUS AND PAINFUL ISSUE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN RESOLVED IN A LESS DAMAGING FASHION. THE ELEVENTH HOUR PRESIDENTIAL SUMMITS OFFERED A LAST MINUTE HOPE THAT THE TWO GOVERNMENTS MIGHT REACH ENOUGH OF AN UNDERSTANDING TO PERMIT ARGENTINA TO SAVE FACE, BUT EVEN THOSE HOPES WERE FINALLY DASHED. TODAY, NOT EVEN THE CHILEAN POSTPONEMENT NOR THE FITZMAURICE LETTER ELICITED MUCH OUTRAGE. PRESS PREMONITIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT WITH

CHILE WERE CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT AND THE GENERAL IMPRESSION HERE
IS THAT ARGENTINA SIMPLY WANTS TO GET THE WHOLE MESS OVER WITH
AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

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Concepts: TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, WATER BOUNDARIES, SUMMIT MEETINGS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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